



Needs Assessment

Glynn County

Hercules August 4, 1998

Introduction

The Georgia Environmental Protection Division (GEPD) requested that the Georgia Division of Public Health (GDPH) address the public health issues associated with Hercules, Inc., a state-listed hazardous waste site in the Glynn County, Georgia. To respond to this request, GDPH assessed the health education needs of residents in the community regarding this site. GDPH conducted a needs assessment to address site-specific health issues and target affected population, and to provide the public with information about the site including history, contaminants of concern, and potential adverse health effects from exposure.

Site Description and History

Hercules has been in operation in central Brunswick since 1920. The industry uses stumps from longleaf pine trees as the raw material from extracting rosin and terpenes for the production of various chemicals including adhesives, chewing gums, beverages, and household cleaners. The facility entered the GEPD Hazardous Site Inventory in May 1994 as a Class IV site. These are sites where corrective action is already being conducted under federal or state authority and assumed to be in compliance with GEPD regulatory standards. Currently, additional sampling data is being collected and, if necessary, a health consultation may be provided if petitioned.

Environmental Sampling Data

The facility produced the pesticide toxaphene from 1948 until 1980. As a result of community concern about potential adverse health effects from exposure to

toxaphene, extensive sampling of soil, both on and off site, by federal and state officials, Hercules, and others have been completed. Results indicate that toxaphene can be found in soil samples taken throughout the city of Brunswick.

Results

The education needs which were assessed can be divided into seven categories:

- The history, extent, and success of community involvement activities
- The potential adverse health effects from exposure to toxaphene
- Educational material and programs currently available
- The extent of environmental contamination
- Plant operations
- Emergency response capabilities of the plant and local officials
- The economic impact of toxaphene contamination to the community

Recommendations

A health education should be developed collaboratively by local health officials and community representatives which will provide systematic learning activities for the purpose of bringing about changes in knowledge, attitudes, and behaviors/skills which will reduce the potential for human exposure to soil contaminated with toxaphene.